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FOREIGN DEPARTMENT



IN CHARGE OF
LAVINIA L. DOCK, R.N.

THE INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF NURSES

WE will not attempt to repeat the entire programme for the coming meeting, as it would take more space than is at our command, but we can say that it is going to be of unusual interest. The evidences of a wide-spread interest in the meetings are most gratifying. Fraternal delegates are coming from Japan, Cuba, Sweden, Belgium, the Australian associations, the conservative association of Holland, and societies in the United States, notably the Spanish-American War Nurses.

The Federation of Nurses at its meeting in Minneapolis on June 9 appointed the following four official delegates: Mrs. Robb, Miss Goodrich, Miss Delano, and Miss Cadmus. Later, on Miss Nutting's stating that, being unable to go to London, she preferred resigning and thus enabling a new president to attend, the Council elected Miss Goodrich as president of the Federation and chose Miss Maxwell as the fourth delegate. Besides the president and delegates it is probable that a large number of nurses will go to the meetings from the United States.

HOSPITAL NURSING IN RUSSIA

A RUSSIAN nurse is on duty at the Nurses' Settlement in New York and has given interesting information as to the nursing system in that country, so little known to the ordinary traveller. She was taught in Wilna, where she also studied midwifery, and we will transcribe her account, as she has but recently learned English.

St. Jacob's Hospital in Wilna is a large city institution, of perhaps a thousand beds or so, at any rate the maternity wards alone have seventy-five beds. It is quite a fine building, lying a little outside the city towards the river, spacious and with some grounds about it. Inside it is well equipped and well built,—a handsome hospital, newer and better than the Jewish hospital in the same town, which is old and shabby. The general nursing system in Russia is as follows: There are no training schools exactly like ours in America, yet they have a system of teaching which is carried on in all the large cities, something like the courses carried on by the Red Cross Society in France for its

members, but with terms of study of longer duration. The Russians have "schools for training nurses" under this system, but we must think of a sort of day school which the pupils attend for a part of every day, while living at home or where they please. The educated nurses in the Russian hospitals are called "Felscher" (men nurses) and "Felscheritza" (women). The schools to prepare these nurses are attached to the large hospitals, and their course of studies always covers two years and sometimes three, so that we can see that they intend this course to be good. The pupils all pay for this education,—no hospital education is given free,—and it costs them about 100 roubles a year or thereabouts. They have, of course, also their living expenses to bear, unless their home is in the same town. The study, lectures, demonstrations, etc., are conducted by the professors and doctors, and the pupils attend certain classes and lectures every day and also, at certain periods, "walk the wards" in the hospital, attend doctors' rounds, watch the ward nurses at their work, and are taught to bandage, take temperatures, apply treatment, give medicines, etc. They do not stay in the wards, but simply go for a few hours every day, and are taught as medical students are. The theoretical teaching is quite extensive and thorough, with strict examinations, and if the pupils fail to pass these they are dropped.

After having successfully taken the two or three years' teaching the pupils receive certificates, and the hospital then fills its permanent positions from those holding a certificate. The "Felscher" and "Felscheritza" are engaged for no special length of time, but as long as they wish to stay and are satisfactory. Every ward has one or more such instructed nurses, besides a "servant" or more. Sometimes the nurses (we will call them) live in the hospital and sometimes they live in their own homes; there is no hard and fast rule. Sometimes they marry, but keep on in their hospital work. They are paid salaries, but have not as dignified nor authoritative positions as our head nurses, nor quite the same responsibility. They give medicines, take temperatures, and carry out procedures; they also bathe the patients (that is, the good and careful ones do), but they do not "give bedpans": that necessary and important duty is performed by the "servants" and it is the servants also who seem to do any freshening or changing of bedclothes that is needed or anything in the way of special cleansing of the patient or his surroundings.

The doctors are quite highly educated, but on the whole do not know as much as the German physicians. In the hospitals some are "nice" and "good," and some are not; quite as everywhere else.

The midwifery course is very thorough, comprising two years of

arduous work and study. Few physicians in Russia actually do obstetrical work, as it is so much the custom for all women except a small minority to have the midwife. However, the rules are strict that the midwife must always send for a physician in case of difficult or dangerous conditions. On the other hand, for the reason that in many of the country regions a doctor may not be within reach, the midwives are taught to be competent in all sorts of emergencies. It is quite the custom with families of wealth to have the midwife to deliver, but to have the doctor on hand also in case he may be needed; then the doctor sits in the parlor and "does not even always wash his hands," as it is more than likely he will not be disturbed.

The Red Cross Society trains Red Cross nurses who are called Sisters of Mercy. They are quite special and aside from the "Felscheritza." They are trained solely in the military hospitals, and only "Gentiles" are accepted for the staff. In case of war service, the Red Cross Sisters are entirely at the disposal and under the orders of the military medical staff.

ITEMS

THE Society for State Registration of Nurses of Great Britain scored an important point on May 13 in securing an interview with the Prime Minister, who consented to receive a deputation and to hear arguments for making the registration bill a government measure. The deputation was large, varied, and influential, including physicians, members of Parliament, women's organizations, and nurses, representing all the organizations of nurses and matrons. The statements were able, and we regret that limited space prevents quoting liberally from them. Miss Huxley spoke for Irish nurses; Dr. Bedford Fenwick, Sir Victor Horsley, and Sir William Macewen defended the nurses' claim as earnestly as ever, and Lord Ampthill and others urged upon the Prime Minister the importance of professional standards as a measure of public importance. The general tenor of Mr. Asquith's replies and comments, however, does not impress us as being encouraging, though we will rejoice if shown to have been a false prophet in this detail. From the stenographic report we suspect that he has been well supplied with all the "anti" arguments, and fancy that this particular women's cause will go the way of the others as far as he is concerned.

THE Jubilee Congress of District Nursing held in Liverpool May 12-14 is described by Miss Hitchcock, who was present as delegate from the Nurses' Settlement in New York, as having been exceedingly interesting, with a great wealth of material from many sources. As Miss

Fulmer will give an account of the proceedings we will only express regret that more visiting nursing associations from America were not present to share in the commemoration of the founding of the modern system of district nursing by Mr. Rathbone. We regret also not seeing any account in the reports of the meetings of the successful establishment of a district nurse in Bordeaux under the direction of Dr. Anna Hamilton. Perhaps, however, this will appear in the published papers. As the Bordeaux nurse is essentially modern it seems a pity for her not to have received special mention in these meetings. The May number of the French nurses' journal gives an interesting résumé of the work of this nurse for the year, and quotes extracts from her diary or daily report showing that her work is done with the utmost intelligence from the social standpoint as well as from that of good nursing.

It is interesting to learn that the experiment of placing trained nurses in the public schools has been undertaken in Paris by the Assistance Publique in co-operation with the municipal council of Paris. The plan was presented by M. André Mesureur, and two of the pupils under Mme. Jacques's direction have been selected to visit two primary schools. We shall give more space later to this extension of public school nursing and trust it will spread widely.

THE announcement of the marriage of M. André Mesureur has just come, and all of the American nurses who had the pleasure of meeting him on the day of the reception in Paris at the Salpêtrière will wish him joy.

AMERICAN nurses arriving in London for the Congress are asked to send their names and addresses to Miss Dock at 431 Oxford St.

REMEMBER, St. Ermin's Hotel will be headquarters for Congress officers, and Mrs. Glane, Anglo-Scandinavian Bureau, 47 Great Portland St., will give information about inexpensive hotels and lodgings.

"As patients, these little people are most excellent," writes Dr. Wilfred T. Grenfell of his "Experiences on the Labrador" in the *June Century*. "They have no fear of pain, and heal rapidly, a tribute, possibly, to our almost germless air. On one occasion, seated in a large Eskimo tubik, or tent, I was seeing the sick of a settlement which I had not visited for eight months. It came the turn of a girl of about fifteen years, who silently held up a frost-bitten toe that needed removing. As there was a dense crowd in the tent, she insisted it should be done at once. The satisfaction of being for the moment the centre of attraction was all the anæsthetic she wanted."